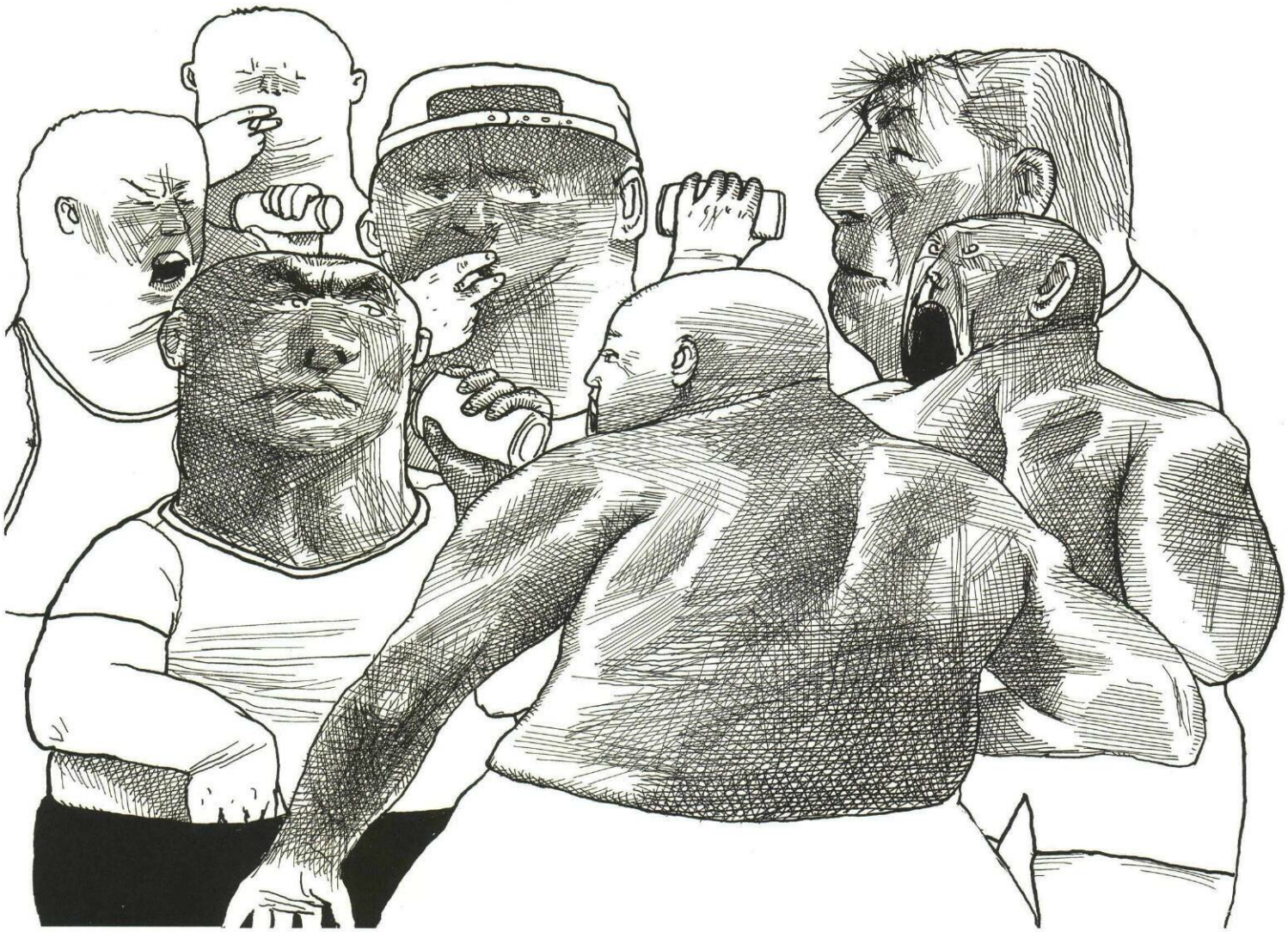
Summer 1997 ◆ Number 12

The Women's Quarterly

It's Always His Fault

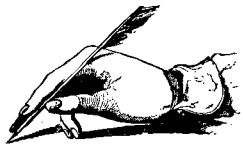
Judges are sentencing thousands of men to undergo feminist indoctrination. They believe this will reduce domestic violence. It won't. By *Sally L. Satel*



Drawing by John Springs

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Diary



This is the Army, Mrs. Jones

RECENTLY, I WATCHED a documentary in which a Viet Nam veteran recalled a battle he'd fought. For three days his Marine company held its position against the Viet Cong in a jungle surrounding a small village. It was damp, humid, and swelteringly hot. The troops ran out of water, and the firing was so fierce that neither reinforcements nor evacuation helicopters could be sent in. The men slept in infested marshes, and hauled their maimed and screaming comrades through the bush. By the time they finally captured the village, the Marines were half-mad with heat and thirst and exhaustion. They brutally cleared out the villagers with grenades and bullets, and burnt down the grass "hootches." The soldier explained that when you had been shot at for three days in the jungle, you were not inclined to observe every United Nations regulation regarding the treatment of civilians. "You have to remember," he said, "that this was war."

Perhaps the problem is that we don't. If we did, then the debate currently raging over women in the military would seem to us as unfathomable as men demanding the right to experience childbirth. The reason we can even contemplate sexual integration of the military is because we are a generation away from the last bloody conflict. Commercials for the Army now sell it like an Outward Bound course: "Be all that you can be," as opposed to "Die for your country." Even the Gulf war, to those of us who watched it on CNN, resembled a large-scale video game, with its futuristic weapons, comically horrible villain, and pocket-change stakes. Why shouldn't women join in the fun, too?

The trouble is, war—real war—is savage, horrible, and in no way resembles a training exercise. Women might be as competent as men at shooting guns and piloting B-52s. But so what? What no one who opposes women in combat is willing to say (outright, at least) is that war simply isn't—and never has been—a place for women. They mumble things about "unit cohesion," or they use the sex scandals to prove that men and women are incapable of training together. But these arguments only play into the advocates' insistence that the military is just like any other traditionally male institution (Congress, for instance) that has eventually adapted to women.

The military, though, is not like other institutions—and should not be like them. What is really at stake in this debate is the future of sex roles in the broader society. Those who wish to see women join in lockstep with male soldiers believe all distinctions between the sexes should be officially eradicated: that men should have no protective role to play just as women should have no special nurturing one. They wish the public to feel that there is no difference between a father and a mother leaving behind orphans; that it's sexist to feel any special pity for a woman's corpse or to be more horrified by the sight of a man shoving his bayonet into a woman's gut than into another man's. By their logic, women will have to be included in any future draft, with no special pleas for mothers or pregnant women.

"A group denied the privilege of serving the country is cut off from a central act of citizenship," wrote E. J. Dionne in the *Washington Post*. Of course, it's a privilege to serve, but we all don't have the equal right to serve. The elderly don't serve. But that doesn't mean there aren't thousands of other ways to do so. Do we think the work women did during both world wars—running the industries, organizing the war effort, and raising future generations single-handedly—was any less critical to the nation's survival than the men who were being gunned down at the front?

Maybe these advocates believe, however, that since the Cold War is over, we will not have to fight a serious war again. Or perhaps they think that women's influence on the military will be to make war more humane and civilized. Maybe female soldiers wouldn't burn down hootches but build day-care centers instead.

Despite what these advocates say, sending women off to war should not be seen as progress but rather as a retreat to barbarism. For what is more barbaric than a society willing to send mothers—and potential mothers—into war? What is more barbaric than teaching men to feel no special respect for the bearers of human life? "Do you realize," Winston Churchill remarked to his wife the night before the D-Day invasion, "that by the time you wake up twenty thousand men may have been killed?" I wonder if these advocates would feel any happier if that great leader had been able to say, "twenty thousand persons."

– Danielle Crittenden

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Women's Quarterly

SUMMER 1997 • NO. 12

DANIELLE CRITTENDEN
Editor

GRACE PAINE TERZIAN
Publisher

MITZI HAMILTON
Art Director

RHONDA K. MOHRMANN
Editorial Assistant

2111 Wilson Boulevard
Suite 550, Arlington, Virginia
22201-3057

Tel.: 703/243-8989
Toll Free Line: 800/224-6000
Fax: 703/243-9230
E-mail: iwf@iwf.org
Website: www.iwf.org

The Women's Quarterly (ISSN:1079-6622) is published by the Independent Women's Forum, a non-profit Section 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

The opinions and views expressed in *The Women's Quarterly* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Independent Women's Forum. Permission to reprint any article must be obtained from the editor. Submissions are welcome and can be mailed or faxed to the editor. All inquiries regarding the Independent Women's Forum and *The Women's Quarterly*, including membership and subscription information, and changes in address, should be directed to our office listed above. Annual membership in the Independent Women's Forum is $30 and includes a subscription to *The Women's Quarterly*. Separate subscriptions to *The Women's Quarterly* are $19.95 annually. Outside the U.S., add $6 to membership and subscription fees. Back issues of *The Women's Quarterly* are available for $5.

INDEPENDENT WOMEN'S FORUM: Anita K. Blair, Executive Vice President and General Counsel; Barbara Ledeen, Executive Director for Policy and Liaison; Lynn Taylor, Vice President for Strategy. BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Elizabeth Lurie, President; Louise V. Oliver, Vice President; Lynne V. Cheney; Midge Decter; Wendy Lee Gramm; Heather R. Higgins; Sally C. Pipes; R. Gaull Silberman.

© 1997 Independent Women's Forum.
All rights reserved.

IN *THIS* ISSUE

Diary: ***Danielle Crittenden*** insists
the trenches are no place for girls 2

It's Always His Fault: ***Sally L. Satel*** explains why
feminist indoctrination will not stop domestic violence 4

Dispatch: ***Julie Ann Kessler*** on
NOW's embrace of polygamy 11

None of Our Business: ***Candace C. Crandall*** says
it's scandalous that we don't know the
long-term risks of abortion 13

The Token Man: ***Fraser Sutherland*** describes
the tender heart of a pretty girl 18

Don't Get Even, Get Mad: ***Walter K. Olson*** says
discrimination suits make everyone miserable 20

Correspondence 24

One Last Observation: ***Rondi Adamson*** suggests
politically correct Barbies 27

Cartoon by Charles Jaffé

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It's Always His Fault

The feminist zeal to condemn men may be endangering the lives of battered women, reports *Sally L. Satel*

4 *Drawings by John Springs*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Let's call him "Joe Six Pack." Every Saturday night, he drinks way too much, cranks up the rock 'n roll way too loud, and smacks his girlfriend for acting just a bit too lippy. Or let's call him "Mr. Pillar of the Community." He's got the perfect wife, the perfect kids. But he's also got one little problem: every time he argues with his wife, he loses control. In the past year, she's been sent to the emergency ward twice. Or let's say they're the Tenants from Hell. They're always yelling at each other. Finally a neighbor calls the police.

Here is the question. Are the men in these scenarios: a) in need of help; b) in need of being locked up; or c) upholders of the patriarchy?

Most people would likely say a) or b) or perhaps both. In fact, however, c) is the answer that more and more of the agencies that deal with domestic violence—including the courts, social workers, and therapists—now give. Increasingly, public officials are buying into Gloria Steinem's assertion that "the patriarchy requires violence or the subliminal threat of violence in order to maintain itself." They are deciding that the perpetrators of domestic violence don't so much need to be punished, or even really counseled, but instead indoctrinated in what are called "profeminist" treatment programs. And they are spending tax dollars to pay for these programs.

A portion of the money for the re-education of batterers comes from Washington, courtesy of the 1994 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). To obtain passage of VAWA, feminist organizations like the National Organization for Women and even secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, pelted legislators with facts and figures: "The leading cause of birth defects is battery during pregnancy." "In emergency rooms, twenty to thirty percent of women arrive because of physical abuse by their partner." "Family violence has killed more women in the last five years than Americans killed in the Viet Nam War." Happily, these alarming factoids aren't true. But the feminist advocacy groups were able to create new bogus statistics faster than the experts were able to shoot the old ones down. And some of the untruths—like the fiction that wife-beating soars on Super Bowl Sunday—have become American myths as durable as the story of young George Washington chopping down the cherry tree.

Still, the problem of domestic violence, even if grossly exaggerated, is horrific enough. So Congress generously authorized $1.6 billion to fund VAWA. Few taxpayers would begrudge this outlay if it actually resulted in the protection of women. But instead there is increasing evidence that the money is being used to further an ideological war against men—one that puts many women at even greater risk.

The feminist theory of domestic abuse, like the feminist theory of rape, holds that all men have the same innate propensity to violence against women: your brother and my boyfriend are deep down every bit as bad as Joel Steinberg. Men who abuse their mates, the theory goes, act violently not because they as individuals can't control their impulses, and not because they are thugs or drunks or particularly troubled people. Domestic abuse, in feminist eyes, is an essential element of the vast male conspiracy to suppress and subordinate women. In other words, the real culprit in a case of domestic violence is not a violent individual man, it is the patriarchy. To stop a man from abusing women, he must be taught to see the errors of the patriarchy and to renounce them.

Thus, a position paper by the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network explains: "Battering is a fulfillment of a cultural expectation, not a deviant or sick behavior." Thus, too, the Seattle-based psychologist Laura Brown, a prominent feminist practitioner, argues that feminist psychotherapy is an "opportunity to help patients see the relationship between their behavior and the patriarchal society in which we are all embedded."

As well, feminists have stretched the definition of abuse to include acts of lying, humiliation, withholding information, and refusing help with child care or housework, under the term "psychological battery." A checklist from a brochure of the Westchester Coalition of Family Violence agencies tells women if their partner behaves in one or more of the following ways, including "an overprotective manner," "turns minor incidents into major arguments," or "insults you," then "you might be abused."

With money provided by VAWA, this view has come to pervade the bureaucracies created to combat domestic violence. In at least a dozen states, including Massachusetts, Colorado, Florida, Washington, and Texas, state guidelines effectively preclude any treatment other than feminist therapy for domestic batterers. Another dozen states, among them Maine and Illinois, are now drafting similar guidelines. These guidelines explicitly prohibit social workers and clinicians from offering therapies that attempt to deal with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

domestic abuse as a problem between a couple unless the man has undergone profeminist treatment first. Profeminists emphatically reject joint counseling, the traditional approach to marital conflict. Joint counseling and other couples-based treatments violate the feminist certainty that it is men who are always and solely responsible for domestic violence: any attempt to involve the batterer's mate in treatment amounts to "blaming the victim."

The dogma that women never provoke, incite, or aggravate domestic conflict, further, has led to some startling departures in domestic law. Hundreds of jurisdictions have adopted what are called "must-arrest" policies: that is, when local police are called to a scene of reported domestic abuse, they must arrest one partner (almost always the man) even if, by the time the authorities arrive, the incident has cooled off and there is no sign of violence, and even if (as is often the case) the woman doesn't want the man arrested. Many of these same jurisdictions have also enacted "no-drop" policies—meaning that if a woman does press charges, she will not be permitted to change her mind and drop them later. Under VAWA, $33 million will be spent this year on the "Grants to Encourage Arrest" program, which uses federal money to induce localities to adopt must-arrest policies. Next year, the budget of the "Grants to Encourage Arrest" program will jump to $59 million.

Of course, it's hard to feel sorry for men charged with abuse. And there is a satisfying, frontier-justice aspect to the feminist treatment programs: what better punishment for a loutish man than to make him endure hours of feminist lecturing? The trouble is, domestic violence—as these same feminists constantly remind us—is no joke. And there are virtually no convincing data that this feminist approach to male violence is effective.

Indeed, the paternalistic intrusiveness that characterizes so much of feminist domestic violence policy frequently has the unintended consequence of harming the very women it was meant to protect. Judge William S. Cannon, who has handled thousands of domestic violence cases through South Bay (San Diego) Family Court, finds that "about eighty percent of the couples we see in court end up staying together." Nonetheless, the California legislature has made it mandatory for judges to issue a restraining order separating the parties in all domestic violence cases. "It's ridiculous," the judge says of this mandatory separation, "each situation is different." Sometimes a woman doesn't want the separation, particularly if the threat from her husband is mild. "If the woman feels relatively safe, she might well rather have her kids' father home with the family," Judge Cannon says. In California, however, this option is no longer open to women. As Judge Cannon says, "We treat women as brainless individuals who are unable to make choices. If a woman wants a restraining order, she can ask us for it."

Persuading victims of domestic violence that they need no psychological help or are never to blame can also backfire, because it pushes many women away from seeking counseling that they plainly need. A prosecutor from Southern California, who preferred not to be identified, told me that many of the women he refers to treatment reject his advice. "They're influenced by the prevailing view in the advocate community that tells them they don't need help. Meanwhile, I'm accused of blaming the victim," the prosecutor says. Some of these women return to husbands who injure or even kill them, when a therapist might have helped them find the strength to stay away. Others end up doing the killing themselves, a tragedy that has happened "more than once on my watch," the prosecutor said. The defense attorneys then claim that the wife is "a victim of battered woman syndrome. They'll say the system failed her because she was never referred for professional help."

It is likewise far from clear that must-arrest policies help victims of domestic abuse. Several studies—including one by Lawrence W. Sherman of the University of Maryland, whose early study on mandatory arrest in a single midwestern city actually gave rise to the program's popularity—suggest that mandatory arrest can escalate spousal violence in some men by further enraging them, and causing them to seek revenge on their lovers once they are released from jail.

But the implicit goal of feminist treatment and legal responses is to separate women from their abusive partners—no matter what the circumstances, and no matter how fervently the women wish otherwise. Many shelter counselors interviewed by Kimberle Crenshaw of the UCLA School of Law believe that a batterer is incapable of breaking the cycle of abuse and the woman's only hope of safety is to leave the relationship. In a *New York Times Magazine* story about spousal abuse, writer Jan Hoffman summed up the advice of Ellen Pence, founder of the much-replicated Duluth Abuse Intervention Program and a staunch believer that all batterers

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are gripped by a hatred of women: "Ellen Pence's advice to women in battering relationships is simply this: Leave. Leave because even the best of programs, even Duluth's, cannot ensure that a violent man will change his ways."

Not very encouraging words from a nationally regarded expert. Perhaps if feminist treatment of domestic violence recognized some cold truths about women and intimate violence, success rates might improve.

For example, contrary to the prevailing view of battered women as weak, helpless, and confused, professor Jacquelyn Campbell reported in 1994 in the *Journal of Family Violence,* that the majority of battered women do take steps to end the abuse in their relationships. In truth, the average abused woman is not Hedda Nussbaum (the obsessed lover of psychopath Joel Steinberg). The sad facts, as discussed by Christine Littleton in the 1993 book *Family Matters: Readings on Family Lives and the Law,* are that many "women who stay in battering relationships accurately perceive the risks of remaining, accurately perceive the risks of leaving, and choose to stay either because the risks of leaving outweigh those of staying or because they are trying to rescue something beyond themselves"—such as their family.

And here is the cruelest failure of profeminist therapy. Since many victims of domestic abuse do want to hold their families together, and since they are trying to weigh the risks of staying with an abusive mate, it does them an enormous disservice to put a dangerous man through a program that cannot fulfill its promise to cure him. "The woman thinks to herself, 'Well, now he's changed,' so she goes back to him and drops her guard. Sometimes with devastating effects," says Dr. Richard J. Gelles, of the University of Rhode Island's Family Violence Research Program, a pioneer researcher in domestic violence. Professor Richard M. McFall, an expert on marital violence with Indiana University, observes that "typically, the man comes out of a useless mandated treatment program no less violent than when he went in, but now he's got a clean bill of psychological health."

Furthermore, the woman herself can be swept into the vortex of misguided efforts prescribed by feminists. While her partner is being reprogrammed to challenge his sexist assumptions, the wives are often sent to feminist support groups. Valerie T., a patient of Dr. Virginia Goldner, a couples therapist at New York's Ackerman Institute for the Family, attended such a group. "Valerie came back and told me she'd felt worse about herself ever since joining the group because 'everyone was supposed to hate the men and want to leave them,'" said Goldner. Cathy Young, author of the forthcoming book, *Beyond the Gender Wars,* says, "Oftentimes the sole qualification to work with battered women is to be one yourself and, of course, to have an abiding hatred of men." In the course of her research, she said, "I remember Renee Ward, director of a Minneapolis shelter, telling me how the advocates' own unresolved anger at men made it very difficult for them to be helpful to the clients, most of whom very much wanted to be in relationships. But it was unthinkable to ever discuss this tension."

Many advocates are also apparently so blinded by ideology that they are unable to draw distinctions between types of abusers. Some men, for example, are first-time offenders, others are brutal recidivists, others attack rarely but harshly, others frequently but less severely, and many are alcoholics. Such a heterogeneous population cannot be treated with a one-size-fits-all approach. Amy Holtzworth-Munroe, an associate professor of psychology at Indiana University, says, "states are basing rigid treatment policy on rhetoric and ideology, not data."

Take the case of "Don," a senior administrator at a southern university. Arrested once for slapping his wife (they are still together), Don was required to attend a Duluth-model program. About fifteen men sat for three hours on ten consecutive Wednesday nights in a classroom headed by two counselors. "The message was clear," Don told me, "whatever she does to you is your fault, whatever you do to her is your fault. It would have been a lot more helpful if they taught us to recognize when we felt ourselves being driven into positions where we lash out. The message should have been 'recognize it, deal with it, and quit hitting.' But all they gave us to work with was guilt." According to Don, "bathroom and cigarette breaks were filled with comments about the whole thing being stupid. In the sessions, group discussions among participants were not allowed to develop—maybe the leaders were afraid we'd unite and challenge their propaganda." Rather than improve their relationships, Don felt the therapy only helped to increase polarization between men and women. "Wives went to support groups and we went to our groups."

Complementing these biases was an equally great omission: the role of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

alcohol in domestic violence. Though studies show a persistent correlation between intoxication and aggression in families, Don's group leaders were adamant that alcohol was never a cause of violence. Don claimed, however, that "every man in the room had been drinking when he was arrested." Booze, of course, is never an acceptable excuse for bad behavior, but there's no question that alcohol pushes some people into violence. Feminist theory downplays the relevance of alcohol abuse, and as a particularly foolish result in Don's program, failed to make sobriety a condition of the treatment for domestic batterers.

Glenna Auxiera, a divorce resolution counselor in Gainesville, Florida, attended a training course on male batterers sponsored by the Duluth Abuse Intervention Program. She reports being "stunned" by what she heard. "The course leaders were fixated on male-bashing," Auxiera says. "I was a battered woman, too, and I see the part I played in the drama of my relationship. Hitting is wrong. Period. But a relationship is a dynamic interaction and if both want to change, counselors should work with them."

But this, of course, is precisely what state guidelines in nearly half the country now or will soon prohibit as the first course of treatment. They would outlaw, for instance, the kind of help that saved the decade-long marriage of a midwestern couple we'll call "Steve and Lois M." Mr. and Mrs. M. were regarded by their community as a model couple. Mr. M. was in fact a high-profile businessman. But two or three times a year, he turned violent. After their last fight, in which he gave Mrs. M. a fractured arm, she gave him an ultimatum: unless he went with her to marriage therapy, she would take their nine-year-old son and leave. He agreed, and the couple saw Eve Lipchik, a Milwaukee, Wisconsin expert in family therapy. "One can still deplore the aggression and be an advocate for the relationship when two people want to stay together and are motivated to make changes in the relationship," says Lipchik. "It's too easy to stuff people into boxes labeled villains and victims."

Mrs. M. did not feel "blamed" when she and her husband saw Lipchik together for four months with follow-up sessions at six and eighteen months. She got what she most wanted: her marriage saved and the violence ended. Of course, the happy ending of the story of Mr. and Mrs. M. does not necessarily await every combative couple: spousal assault is a difficult behavior to change. But with a good therapist, difficult change is not impossible. Richard Heyman, of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, found that group conjoint therapy (several couples treated together) produced a significant reduction in both psychological and physical aggression immediately following treatment and one year later. This applied when the couple was intact, the degree of violence not severe, and the couple acknowledged that aggression was a problem, and often a mutual one.

Of course, joint-therapy is not for everyone. It may even be outright dangerous when the man causes frequent injury or when the woman is afraid of him. Not only will the woman be hesitant to tell the truth in counseling sessions, but her husband might well retaliate for disclosures she makes to the counselor. A woman in such a situation is at real risk and must protect herself though she may find it hard—psychologically and physically—to pull away. For her, writes Dr. Virginia Goldner, "the ideological purity and righteous indignation of the battered woman's movement is all that protects her from being pulled back into the swamp of abuse." Maybe so, but more often the violence is less intense and, as psychologist Judith Shervin writes, "men and women are bound in their dance of mutual destructiveness.... Women must share responsibility for their behavior and contributions to domestic violence."

THESE CONTRIBUTIONS ARE far bigger than feminists are willing to admit. According to the landmark 1980 book, *Behind Closed Doors: Violence in the American Family* by Murray A. Straus, Richard J. Gelles, and Suzanne K. Steinmetz, about twelve percent of couples engage in physical aggression. Severe violence such as punching, biting, kicking, or using a weapon is as likely to be committed by wives as husbands—at a rate of about one in twenty for both sexes. Rates of less severe assault such as pushing and grabbing are also comparable, about one in thirteen for both men and women.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At first glance, these data don't seem consistent with those of the Department of Justice's statistics. Its 1994 National Crime Victimization Survey stated that "women were about six times more likely than men to experience violence by an intimate." But this merely reflects the fact that women, unlike men, are rarely violent outside the home. Sometimes their aggression is in self-defense. A 1995 DOJ report showed that wives committed forty-one percent of all spousal murders in 1988 (the year covered in the report). However, eighty-one percent of the accused wives, compared to ninety-four percent of the accused husbands, were convicted of homicide. The lower conviction rate for wives, the report said, reflected the fact that they were more likely to have killed in self-defense. Even so, the sentences varied dramatically: wives received average prison sentences of six years, husbands sixteen and a half years.

But self-defense doesn't explain all female-on-male aggression. The National Family Violence Survey, developed by Straus and Gelles and funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, is a widely respected assessment that taps a representative sample of married and cohabiting couples. The researchers interviewed thousands of couples in 1975, 1985, and 1992. Extrapolating from their 1985 survey of more than six thousand couples, the authors estimate that 1.8 million females are the victims of severe domestic violence each year (with injuries suffered by one in ten), but so were about 2.1 million men. The rates of male-on-female aggression declined between 1975 and 1992 while female-on-male stayed constant. The surveys also revealed that women suffered actual injury at about seven times the rate of men but that they used weapons such as baseball bats, boiling water, and knives (among other things) to make up for their physical disadvantage. Many of these women freely admitted on the survey that their use of weapons was not in self-defense.

Actually, when it comes to the murder of intimates, as criminologist Coramae Richey Mann documented in her 1996 study of female killers, *When Women Kill*, murderesses are seldom helpless angels: seventy-eight percent of the women in Mann's study had prior arrest records and fifty-five percent a history of violence. Lately, Straus has been revising his views. "I [once] explained the high rate of attacks by wives largely as a response to or as a defense against assault by the partner. However, new evidence raises questions about that interpretation," he wrote in his contribution to the 1996 book, *Domestic Violence.*

After reviewing the available research, Straus concludes that twenty-five to thirty percent of violent married and cohabiting couples are violent solely because of attacks by the wife. About twenty-five percent of violence between couples is initiated by men. The remaining half is classified as mutual. This is true whether the analysis is based on all assaults or only potentially injurious and life-threatening ones. (These findings are corroborated by other studies, including the 1991 Los Angeles Epidemiology Catchment Area study, and the 1990 National Survey of Households and Families.)

In fact, among America's rapidly growing population of elderly couples, violence by women appears more common than violence by men. A well-regarded 1988 Boston survey by Karl Pillemer and David Finkelhor found that wives were more than twice as likely to assault an elderly husband as vice versa.

Anyone still inclined to blame domestic violence on the patriarchy and male aggression ought to take a look at the statistics on violence against children. A just-released report from the Department of Health and Human Services, "Child Maltreatment in the United States," finds that women aged twenty to forty-nine are almost twice as likely as males to be "perpetrators of child maltreatment." According to a 1994 Department of Justice report, mothers are responsible in fifty-five percent of cases in which children are killed by their parents. The National Center on Child Abuse Prevention attributes fifty percent of the child abuse fatalities that occurred between 1986 and 1993 to the natural mother, twenty-three percent to the natural father, and twenty-seven percent to boyfriends and others.

Finally, consider domestic aggression within lesbian couples. If feminists are right, shouldn't these matches be exempt from the sex-driven power struggles that plague heterosexual couples?

Instead, according to Jeanie Morrow, director of the Lesbian Domestic Violence Program at W.O.M.A.N., Inc. in San Francisco, physical abuse between lesbian partners is at least as serious a problem as it is among heterosexuals. The Battered Women's Justice Project in Minneapolis, a clearinghouse for statistics, confirms this. "Most evidence suggests that lesbians and heterosexuals are comparably aggressive in their relationships," said spokeswoman Susan Gibel.

Some survey studies have actually

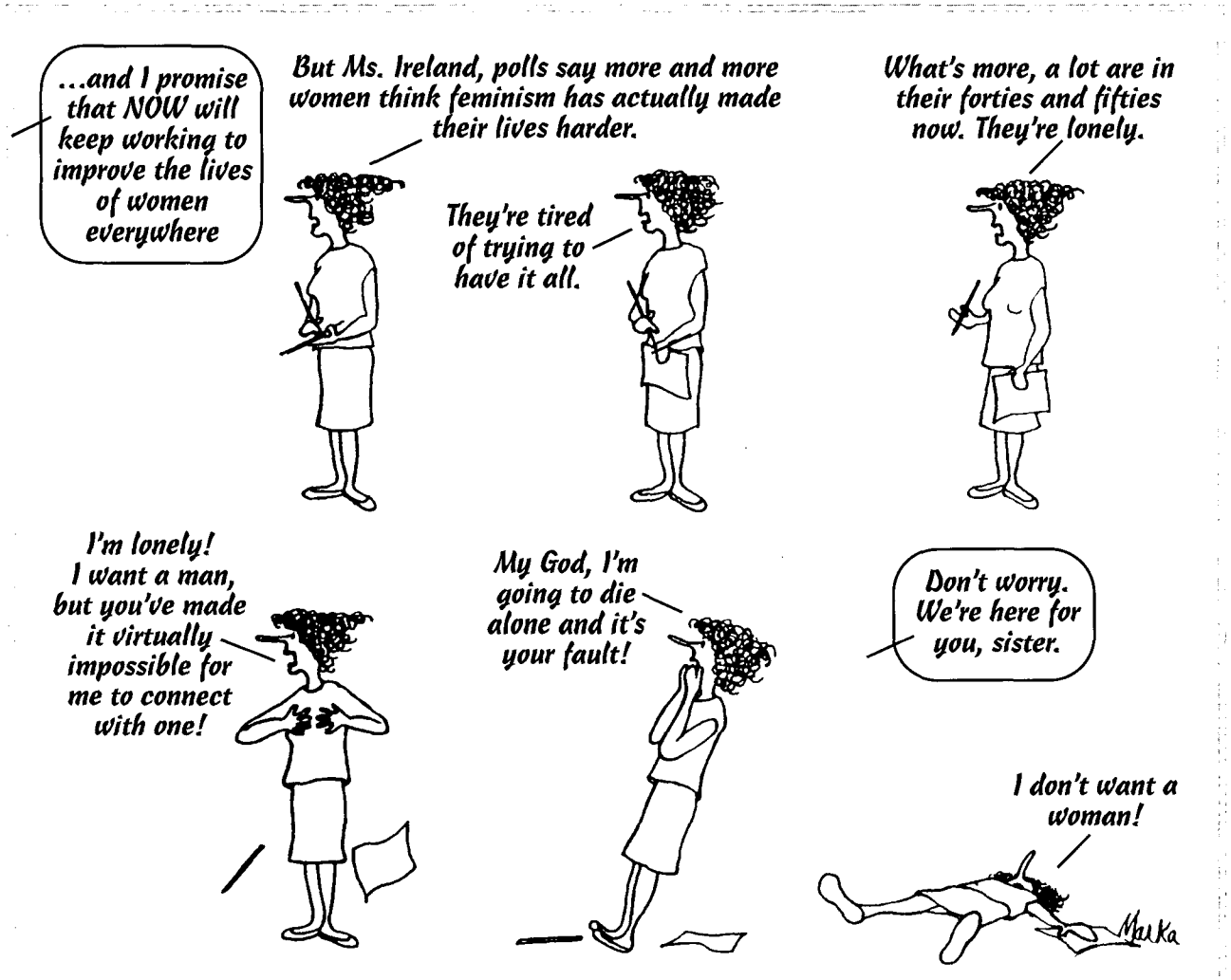
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

suggested a higher incidence of violence among lesbian partners, but it's impossible to know for certain since there's no reliable baseline count of lesbian couples in the population at large. According to Morrow, the lesbian community has been reluctant to acknowledge intimate violence within its ranks—after all, this would endanger the all-purpose, battering-as-a-consequence-of-male-privilege explanation. Morrow's program treats about three hundred women a year but she wonders how many more need help. Because they are "doubly closeted," as Morrow puts it, women who are both gay and abused may be especially reluctant to use services or report assaults to the police.

Like so many projects of the feminist agenda, the battered women's movement has outlived its useful beginnings, which was to help women leave violent relationships and persuade the legal system to take domestic abuse more seriously. Now they have brought us to a point at which a single complaint touches off an irreversible cascade of useless and often destructive legal and therapeutic events. This could well have a chilling effect upon victims of real violence, who may be reluctant to file police reports or to seek help if it subjects them to further battery from the authorities. And it certainly won't help violent men if they emerge from so-called treatment programs no more enlightened but certainly more angry, more resentful, and as dangerous as ever.

Aggression is a deeply personal and complex behavior, not a social defect expressed through the actions of men. Yet to feminists, it can only be the sound of one hand slapping: the man's. So long as this view prevails, we won't be helping the real victims; indeed, we will only be exposing them to more danger. ◆

Sally L. Satel, M.D., is a psychiatrist and lecturer at the Yale School of Medicine. She also serves on the National Advisory Board of the Independent Women's Forum.


...and I promise that NOW will keep working to improve the lives of women everywhere
But Ms. Ireland, polls say more and more women think feminism has actually made their lives harder.
They're tired of trying to have it all.
What's more, a lot are in their forties and fifties now. They're lonely.
I'm lonely! I want a man, but you've made it virtually impossible for me to connect with one!
My God, I'm going to die alone and it's your fault!
Don't worry. We're here for you, sister.
I don't want a woman!
Marka

Cartoon by Marka Lazar

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dispatch

An Immodest Proposal

The Utah chapter of NOW embraces polygamy as a solution to the problems of working mothers, reports *Julie Ann Kessler*

Elizabeth Joseph is one of eight women "married" to Alex Joseph of Big Water, Utah. Joseph, a self-proclaimed feminist, appeared as a featured speaker at a May meeting of the Utah chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW), where she promoted the polygamous lifestyle as a way of helping career women.

And she should know. She works as the news and public affairs director at two radio stations in Page, Arizona, as the city attorney of Big Water, and as an instructor in law, business, and journalism at Coconino Community College. Joseph says that without her current domestic arrangement, these jobs might not have been possible. "I've maximized my female potential without the tradeoffs associated with monogamy," she says. For one thing, she was "able to go to law school four hundred miles away, knowing [her] husband had clean shorts in the morning and dinner at night." Joseph also boasts that her eight-year-old son "has never seen the inside of a day-care center."

She has a point. If women are going to have careers like men, then someone will have to look after the children. What better "high quality care" than another mother—or even two? And in these times when our understanding of family has expanded to include gay parents, blended families, and single-parent families, why not include polygamous families?

Certainly Ellen George, spokesman for NOW's Utah chapter, sees no problem, which is why the group invited Joseph to speak. When asked whether she thought the national organization would support polygamy too, she said, "Why wouldn't it? We fight for lesbian families and single-parent families. I don't know why we wouldn't support this." Robin Frodge, a Utah member of NOW who also serves on the national board, agreed. NOW supports "an expanded definition of family including same-sex parents," she said. "It is very difficult to look at that and not support other configurations of families, including polygamous families."

When asked how the audience reacted to Joseph's talk, George said that the Utah crowd was more surprised to hear from Mormon feminists, who were also on the program, than from a polygamist feminist. Joseph is not a Mormon (the Mormon church excommunicates members who practice polygamy). Frodge was pleased to report, in fact, that the Joseph wives were "all good feminists, bright and intelligent" and that the Joseph household recognizes that there are differences between their brand of polygamy and the religious-based polygamy that is common among breakaway Mormon sects in southern Utah. She noted that "there are not a lot of men worth marrying" so it is better if many good women (read: feminists) marry the same man. Frodge also pointed out that this was a good way to make sure that the man is "properly trained."

Whether or not Elizabeth Joseph is ultimately embraced as an ally of the national feminist movement, she has at least succeeded in the only logical weaving of the two main strands of feminism: the strand that pushes women to measure their success with the same yardstick as men; and the strand that argues for the creation of a new, more female way to measure success. Women today are brought up to believe that they can have all of the rewards of work and still have all of the rewards of motherhood (even into our sixties!) thanks to science and day care. They are also constantly told by the women's movement that they should never sacrifice anything if they are to be true to themselves.

So will feminism adopt this practical means for maximizing female potential? "If NOW is about anything, it is about choice," avowed Luci Malins, the former executive

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

coordinator of NOW's Utah chapter.

But before they get too excited about discovering another issue of "choice," the NOW executive might contemplate why polygamy has such a bad name in this country. Traditionally the product of oligarchic and tyrannical societies, the history of polygamy is intertwined with the history of slavery. That's why the Republican party platform of 1856 condemned "those twin relics of barbarism—Polygamy and Slavery." And, contrary to what Elizabeth Joseph insists, polygamy places women in a condition of servitude, reducing the woman to a fractional wife rather than an equal partner with her husband.

In 1879, the Supreme Court ruled in *Reynolds* v. *U.S.* that Mormons were not exempt from laws forbidding multiple wives. The justices wrote that a "free, self-governing commonwealth" presupposes monogamy, upon which "society may be said to be built. . . . [P]olygamy leads to the patriarchal principle, and which, when applied to large communities, fetters the people in stationary despotism, while that principle cannot long exist in connection with monogamy."

It's ironic, but maybe unsurprising, that feminism—ostensibly an attack on the patriarchy—would find its logical support among those who would promote the patriarchy in its grossest form. ◆

Julie Ann Kessler is director of academic programs at the Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy in Claremont, California, as well as an adjunct professor of political science at Azusa Pacific University.

POLL-POURRI

Passing Fashions

Karlyn Bowman reveals the public's attitudes towards shorts, heels, and Kennedys

First, a rising tolerance for ladies in pants: *In 1939, George Gallup asked Americans whether it was "indecent" for women to wear shorts for street wear. Sixty-three percent said it was. As late as 1961, two thirds "disapproved" of women wearing shorts in public. In 1948, thirty-nine percent disapproved of women "of any age wearing slacks in public, that is, for example, while shopping" although thirty-four percent approved. When Gallup returned to the subject in 1961, slacks received the public's OK. Two-thirds approved of women wearing them in public.*

Now everyone dresses like a bum: *A 1996 survey by Roper Starch Worldwide reveals that women wear blouses or shirts, jeans, or running shoes most often. For men, it's blue jeans, T-shirts, or sports shirts. Bruskin-Goldring Research reports that slightly over fifty percent of working adults are allowed by their employer to dress casually every day. Fifty-six percent of women own a suit with a skirt, and slightly more than half of men have a business suit, but only sixteen percent of both sexes wear the ensembles regularly. Women say they look best in a dress. Men say they are at their best in jeans and button-down dress shirts. A third of women have a long evening dress or skirt, and seventeen percent of men own a tuxedo.*

Meanwhile, heels decline: *In 1996, Dr. Scholl's and the American Podiatric Medical Association updated a 1986 survey and found that the percentage of women saying they don't wear high heels daily spiked from thirty-nine to forty-six. A majority of women in both years considered a two-inch heel high. The leveling impulse is clearly being driven by the young. In 1996, forty-two percent of women aged eighteen to twenty-nine, compared to about thirty percent of those over thirty-five years old, described a one-inch heel as high. A Roper Starch Worldwide survey meanwhile revealed that the average woman has fifteen pairs of shoes. Fifty-eight percent in the survey agreed that one "can never have too many pairs of shoes."*

And Kennedys are out of fashion: *In April, the survey firm Mason-Dixon conducted a poll of 437 likely Massachusetts voters for a WHDH-TV poll. Only twelve percent in the survey said the male members of the Kennedy family show proper respect for women. Fifty-nine percent said they did not, and twenty-two percent had no opinion.* ◆

Karlyn Bowman is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

None of Our Business?

The millions of women who have undergone abortions cannot find out if the operation carries long-term health risks, writes *Candace C. Crandall*

A WOMAN FACED with the decision of whether or not to seek an abortion will ask herself many questions. The question she may least consider—until after the fact—is how an abortion will affect her future health. Will it jeopardize her ability to have other children? Will it increase her chance of developing a life-threatening disease, like breast cancer?

With tens of millions of women having undergone one or multiple abortions, these are questions for which there are still no definitive answers. Not because science is unable to provide them, but because political pressures work against objective research.

Instead, women who have had abortions are subject to an almost monthly assault of conflicting information about what risks, exactly, they may have incurred. On the cancer issue, for instance, media reports produced the following over three years: "Higher risk of breast cancer found in young women who had abortions" (October 1994); "Strong abortion-breast cancer link revealed" (October 1996); "New study questions abortion-cancer link" (December 1996); "Study finds no link between abortion and breast cancer" (1997). Reports have raised the specter of other potentially serious long-term health effects—among them infertility, miscarriage, and ectopic pregnancies—only to have them refuted by one study, and then raised again by another. Which is right?

Journalists often have their own ax to grind on this issue, of course, but even the few who attempt to interpret the research objectively run into a wall of half-truths and distortions. Try to obtain unbiased information on abortion-related health risks and here are some of the "experts" one encounters:

At one end of the spectrum is Joel Brind, professor of endocrinology at the City University of New York and a celebrity in the pro-life camp, who publishes a newsletter called the *Abortion-Breast Cancer Quarterly*. Brind is often quoted by journalists on the abortion issue, but his publication sounds less than scientific, fond as he is of words like "cover-up," "crisis pregnancy," "desperate mothers," and "mainstream denial" of "a woman's right to know." "Is it worth $45 a year," he asks in his advertisements, "to spare even *one woman* the life-threatening agony of *breast cancer*?" [Emphasis his.] Subscribe now and he'll throw in a free, autographed copy of his latest analysis.

But are those in the pro-choice camp any more reliable? And should federal agencies responsible for monitoring the nation's health be disseminating these advocates' research as the last word in objectivity? Carol Rowland Hogue, a feminist academic who holds an endowed chair at Emory University in Atlanta, reviews research papers on the effect of abortion on future reproduction. Her conclusions are cited and distributed by the federal Centers for Disease Control. But get her on the telephone and it becomes clear that she prefers lengthy harangues against the pro-life movement to any boring discussion of health risks. And when she does discuss such risks, her views sound disturbingly tainted by personal politics.

Hogue notes approvingly, for example, that "many feminists now recommend barrier devices, backed up by

Veiled Dancer; *Greek, c. 200 B.C.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

abortion" as the "safest" contraceptive strategy for women. When asked if that wouldn't encourage multiple abortions, she replies that multiple abortions are not a problem. After all, she says, in Eastern Europe under the communists, it was not uncommon for women to have as many as twenty-five abortions and feel no ill effects at all. Besides, women who have multiple abortions really can't help it. Such women, Hogue insists, are simply "more fertile" than other women. And how does she know? Because studies comparing women one month after an abortion with women one month after childbirth show that the abortion group have much higher rates of repeat pregnancy during that period.

That such a remark might sound idiotic to some women—particularly those who know firsthand just how sexy they feel within a month of having a baby—apparently never occurs to Hogue. But don't ask her to elaborate. When I did she bristled: "It's apparent that I'm not talking to someone with an open mind on this issue!"

The effect is to leave those of us trying to sort out the facts caught somewhere between "The sky is falling!" and "What, me worry?" Anecdotal reports of risks related to abortion, particularly miscarriage, are troubling. Of the six women I know who have had abortions, five later experienced multiple miscarriages and were unable to carry a pregnancy to term. But this kind of evidence can be misleading too.

The problem—and this is true for epidemiological research as well—is that it is impossible for an observer to know all of the other risk factors such women may have incurred. Genetic predisposition, for example, may present the clearest risk for developing breast cancer, but other studies have implicated fatty diets, alcohol consumption, oral contraceptives, pesticides, a late first pregnancy, smoking, failure to breastfeed, age at the onset of menstruation, and even a woman's weight at birth! Similarly, a woman's ability to become pregnant and successfully carry a pregnancy to term may be adversely affected by age, a history of IUD use, sexually transmitted disease, pelvic inflammatory disease, inherited physiological disorders, and even psychological problems.

Epidemiologists trying to credibly establish, or disprove, a connection between abortion and disease or dysfunction have to try to eliminate or in some way account for these other risk factors. Certainly many women experience infertility, miscarriage, and breast cancer, with no previous history of abortion; others who have had abortions may have no problems at all.

What is worse, getting sound health information to the public is hampered by the fact that we live in an era of grant-driven research, where vague conclusions and poorly designed studies are nevertheless used to grab headlines, whip up public hysteria, underpin absurd government policies on everything from radon exposure to secondhand smoke—and get more grants. Two years ago in the *New York Times*, Dr. Charles H. Hennekens of the Harvard School of Public Health characterized the situation with surprising honesty: "Epidemiology is a crude and inexact science. Eighty percent of the cases are almost all hypothesis. We tend to overstate findings, either because we want attention or more grant money."

Those of us who follow this degradation of science tend to take a cynical view of new research results, particularly those announced with great fanfare at press conferences. But here are the troubling facts we do know: the incidence of breast cancer among women took a big jump after 1980, particularly among black women under fifty, a group that also shows a high rate of abortion. Breast cancer among men, a more rare condition, increased not at all. What is more, the possibility that undergoing an induced abortion can increase a woman's risk of developing breast cancer—or lead to problems with infertility and miscarriage—is biologically plausible, and that is the first test of whether a risk factor should be taken seriously or not.

What may link abortion to breast cancer is this: in pregnancy, a woman's body experiences a huge surge in the hormone estrogen—as much as twenty-fold—resulting in dramatic increases in the number of new breast cells. Because of the known link between estrogen and cancer, these rapidly dividing new cells are thought to be particularly susceptible to malignancy. But then something interesting happens. While estrogen begins the process of rapid cell division and tissue growth, a second hormone released during the last trimester shuts it down, allowing the cells to mature and differentiate into specialized cells that can produce milk. This hormone also sorts out and eliminates cells growing out of control, making the woman's breast tissue actually less susceptible to cancer. An abortion, whether performed in a clinic or induced chemically—with RU-486, for example—would interrupt the release of this protective second hormone.

Evidence purporting to show a positive association between induced abortion and breast cancer was first

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

published in 1957 in Japan in a comprehensive study examining risk factors for cancer. Since then, more than forty studies have looked at induced abortion as a possible risk factor for breast cancer but, like the Japanese study, the overwhelming majority were not designed to examine solely the breast cancer/induced abortion relationship. Instead, they combined induced abortion with spontaneous abortion (miscarriage), oral contraceptive use, environmental factors, and other risks, which tended to confuse conclusions about any effect attributable solely to abortion. Moreover, many studies did not control for age, family history, or other contributing factors such as diet, alcohol consumption, and income, which affects a woman's access to health care. When a positive association was found, it was often dismissed as largely due to "recall bias"—the notion that when women are asked to recollect risk factors, those stricken with breast cancer are more likely to reveal a past abortion than those free of disease.

As a result, little public attention was paid to a possible breast cancer/abortion link until 1994, when Janet Daling, of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, published a paper in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*. She concluded that women who had undergone an induced abortion incurred a fifty percent greater risk of developing breast cancer before age forty-five, with even higher risks for women under eighteen or over thirty at the time of their abortions, or for those who had aborted a pregnancy after the eighth week. For the women aged seventeen or younger who aborted a first pregnancy after the eighth week—a small subset of Daling's study—the risk went up an alarming eight hundred percent.

Interestingly, Daling found that a miscarriage did not elevate a woman's risk of breast cancer. She speculated that, with miscarriage, the fetus may have died days earlier than when it was actually expelled or that the woman may not have experienced a sufficient hormonal surge to sustain the pregnancy to begin with. Even more intriguing, Daling tested for "recall bias" by conducting a concurrent study of induced abortion and cervical cancer. Experts agree there is no relationship between abortion and cervical cancer, but if "recall bias" was a factor, this study should have turned up a similar elevated risk; it did not.

Daling, who is pro-choice (in the current climate, scientists must now state their politics along with their results), was unprepared for the furor her report touched off. Pro-choice activists sought to discredit her conclusions; even some of her own colleagues implied that she had somehow cooked her results to impede a woman's legal right to abortion. Editors at the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* got so testy, they took the unusual step of publishing an editorial disclaimer in the same issue as Daling's report.

But since 1994, seven additional studies have been published, honing in on the breast cancer/induced abortion relationship. Results have been mixed. Daling also published a study of abortion and breast cancer among young white women in August 1996; she found a ninety percent increased risk. In December 1996, the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* published a Dutch study that also found a ninety percent increased risk, but the editors—and the authors themselves—then went to great lengths to explain why the results were irrelevant, including a claim of reporting bias among Catholic women.

Then, this past January, a retrospective look at the medical records of 1.5 million Danish women was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The authors concluded that induced abortion posed no increased risk of breast cancer and only a tiny risk for those having late-trimester abortions; indeed, an editorial in the same issue stated flatly that now "a woman need not worry."

Unfortunately, the Danish study has since been shown to have serious flaws. The authors admitted in their report that they "might have obtained an incomplete history of induced abortions for some of the oldest women" in the group, an error that likely misclassified tens of thousands of women with breast cancer as having had no abortions. In addition, many of the younger women studied—those who'd had the most abortions—had not yet reached an age where most breast cancers begin to develop.

So what are women to make of the cancer risk? To begin with, the association between induced abortion and an overall increase in the risk of breast cancer is still weak. Even Joel Brind concedes this. Claims by some pro-life activists that thousands of breast cancer deaths are attributable solely to induced abortion cannot be credibly substantiated, and allegations of a "cover-up" are needlessly inflammatory. But neither can we confidently insist—as some in the pro-choice movement do—that there is *no* risk. Scattered throughout these studies are unsettling results among certain sub-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sets of women: Daling's teenagers in her 1994 paper, for example; women who have undergone second- and third-trimester abortions (also heavily represented among teenagers); or women who aborted a first pregnancy after age forty.

It would be premature to draw any conclusions from the incidence of breast cancer in these women, because the smaller the group studied the larger the margin for error. But researchers are getting better at identifying high-risk populations. What is needed now is to locate such women at the time of their abortions and to track them over time. That is a costly process that yields no quick answers, but it could yield some conclusive ones.

For many women, however, risks to future pregnancies are a much greater and more immediate concern than cancer, especially since environmentalists in recent years have repeatedly promoted various bogus cancer scares, even as life expectancy has gone up and up. Surveys by the Alan Guttmacher Institute show that just over seventy percent of the women undergoing abortion do intend, at some point, to have other children. And here, some noteworthy developments have taken place. The Family Growth Survey of the National Center for Health reports that women who have never had a child, who once accounted for just seventeen percent of all women experiencing infertility and miscarriage, now account for half, with married black women showing higher rates than married white women.

In fact, women have been flooding into fertility clinics in recent years, and physician visits to treat infertility have more than tripled in the last three decades. Researchers peg this change to a greater prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases and pelvic inflammatory disease and, perhaps more important, baby boomers delaying marriage and childbearing until their late thirties or early forties. But how much of that delay is due to abortion, no one seems to know.

Abortion and Women's Health, a publication of the Alan Guttmacher Institute—which is partly funded by the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, an abortion provider—reassures women about future fertility, citing "an extensive review of the worldwide literature," conducted by researchers from the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Population Council—*i.e.*, Carol Hogue and colleagues. It concludes that a single, first-trimester abortion by vacuum aspiration entails no increased risk of subsequent infertility, ectopic pregnancy, or miscarriage. But it is only by reading the footnotes that one learns that this review was published way back in 1982. Moreover, Hogue's review hedges on the effect of multiple abortions or abortions after the first trimester, saying only that additional research is needed.

Susan Tew, deputy communications director for Guttmacher, concedes that its data on long-term risks are old and "pretty poor." The National Abortion Federation should have this information "but they don't because the providers don't follow up on their patients." Also, she says, pregnancy risks can be difficult to measure because the primary cause may be STDs or infection.

Ay, and there's the rub. Aside from those instances where an abortion turns out badly and the woman ends up with a hysterectomy, only a handful of infertility cases have been attributed solely to induced abortion—such as cases where fetal bone fragments have been left in the uterus where they act, researchers believe, in much the same way as an IUD. But several studies have now shown an association between induced abortion in women with untreated sexually transmitted disease—largely chlamydia—and infertility and miscarriage. Chlamydia, it must be noted, has reached epidemic proportions in the United States, with nearly half a million cases diagnosed each year.

In 1992, a Danish study found that twenty percent of the women harboring chlamydia at the time of their abortions progressed to pelvic inflammatory disease, a serious chronic infection which can result in miscarriage and/or scarring of the fallopian tubes. Of those, ten percent became infertile and twenty-two percent miscarried a subsequent pregnancy. The researchers advised that women seeking abortion be examined for chlamydia and treated with appropriate antibiotics no later than at the time of their abortion. Another Danish study, published in Germany in 1994, found that seventy-two percent of the women studied whose chlamydia was not treated at the time of their abortions, progressed to pelvic inflammatory disease within two years. Debates over whether pregnancy problems that may arise from this effect are truly "abortion-related" hinge on whether the STD is considered the primary cause, even if the abortion was the mechanism for introducing infection into the uterus.

Meanwhile, each year some seven hundred thousand American women undergo at least their second abortion, some three hundred thousand at least their third. According to the CDC,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about fifteen percent of all abortions in the United States will be performed in the second trimester or later. Yet incredibly, there is little research being done on the effect of multiple and late-term abortions on women's future reproduction. In the dozen or so states that have Supreme Court-sanctioned informed consent laws, women are told that multiple abortions may make it difficult to have children later in life. Some infertility support groups also list two or more abortions as a risk factor for infertility and miscarriage.

But an updated review of the literature published in 1990, again by Carol Hogue and colleagues, still focused only on single, vacuum-aspiration abortions performed during the first trimester. The report concluded that there were generally no long-term risks, except in those abortions complicated by infection, but noted that "a variety of conditions"—among them sterility, miscarriage, tubal pregnancies, stillbirths, premature births, birth defects, and emotional disorders—had been "ascribed anecdotally to induced abortion."

So what we have at this point are some associations between induced abortion and long-term health risks that are biologically plausible, and some evidence along the lines of what we might expect to see if indeed there were a cause-and-effect relationship. What we don't see (and unfortunately the definitive studies are not being done) is conclusive statistical evidence linking the two.

This controversy, however, should provoke caution. Political pressures—as demonstrated by the editorial disclaimers accompanying abortion studies published in scientific journals—work against the funding of abortion research. Moreover, because breast cancer in women usually develops after age forty, if there is any increased risk to certain subgroups—*i.e.*, women who aborted a first pregnancy before age eighteen—the first of these cancers would only just now be showing up twenty-five years after *Roe* v. *Wade*.

It cannot be stressed enough that having an abortion, whether chemically or surgically induced, can carry certain risks. As Susan Tew of the Alan Guttmacher Institute puts it, the magnitude of these risks may "depend on how well the patient chooses to inform herself." In the current political climate, obtaining accurate information is almost impossible. And as deliberately misleading as some pro-life activists can be, much of the blame for this situation must fall on those who have made abortion an unassailable shibboleth.

The bottom line is that women seeking abortions would do well to identify factors that may put them into one of the groups thought to be at a higher risk for breast cancer, and take that into consideration when making their decision. They should certainly ensure that any sexually transmitted disease is diagnosed and treated before undergoing an abortion. And, given the uncertainties, women should regard the idea that multiple abortion is a reasonable contraception strategy as the obvious nonsense that it is. There are many debatable points about this issue. Health should not be one of them. ◆

Candace C. Crandall writes on women's health issues for The Science & Environmental Policy Project in Fairfax, Virginia.

Pssst. Don't Miss Out on Sex

Wouldn't you rather your daughter hear about sex from The Women's Quarterly *than her high school gym teacher?*

Okay, then, wouldn't ***you*** *rather hear about sex from us ?*

You won't want to miss our upcoming, special fall issue on SEX. We're ripping off our pearl chokers, undoing the top buttons of our sweater sets, and really going to town on the subject:

Carolyn Graglia *will attack feminist tramps,* ***Lisa Schiffren*** *will tell us how a nice conservative girl should behave,* ***Melinda Sidak*** *will yearn for the revival of social disapproval, and* ***Becky Garrison*** *will interview the little lady who started the sexual revolution,* ***Helen Gurley Brown.***

Plus! *Our "Token Men,"* ***David Brooks*** *and* ***Christopher Hitchens,*** *will debate the question, "Which is more attractive: left-wing women or right-wing women?" And much, much more.*

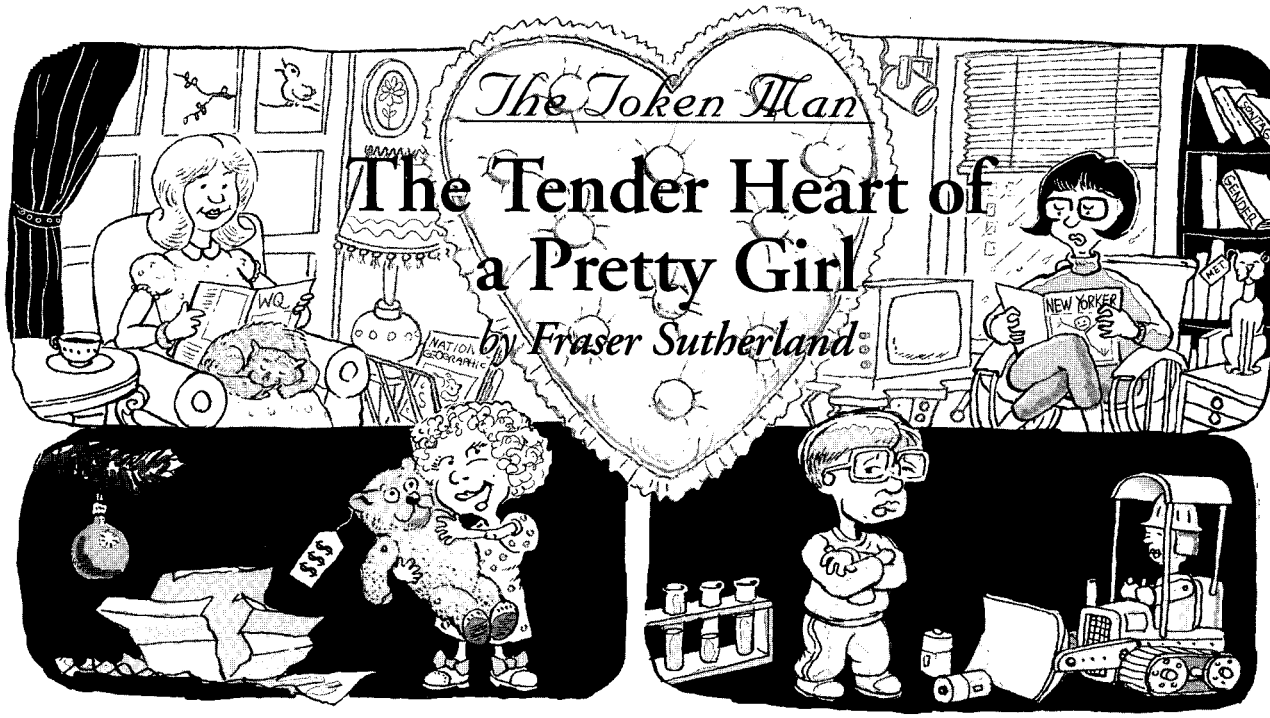
A breathy female voice is ready to take your subscription. Call toll free: 1-800-224-6000. Just $16.95 for a full years' worth of TWQ. *And yes, your grandmother would enjoy a gift subscription, too.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Token Man

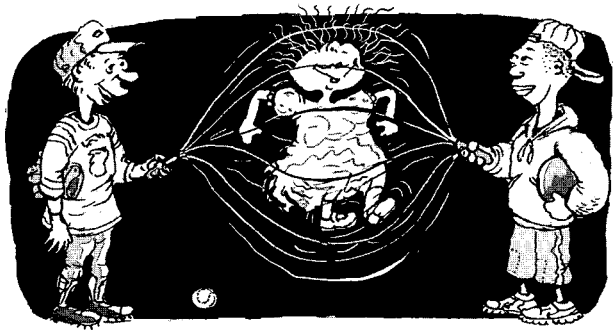
The Tender Heart of a Pretty Girl

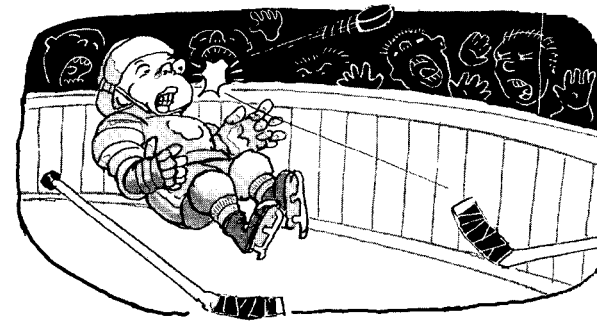
by Fraser Sutherland



The tender heart of a pretty girl
Needs a whack of loving care
To wound her feelings is a crime
She can't be left just standing there.

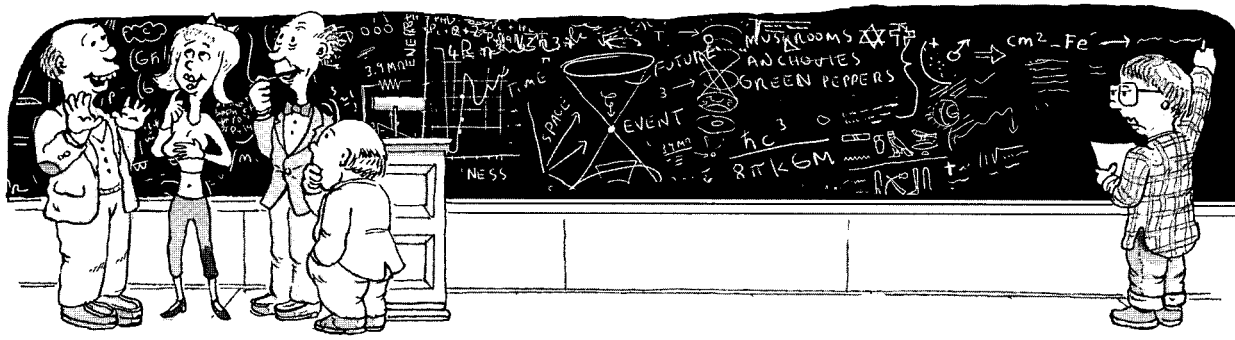
In this respect she's different
From the girls men view as plain
Men can trample on these girls
They're impervious to pain.





But the tender heart of a pretty girl
Isn't tough enough to take it.
It will shatter into smithereens
The least amount you shake it.

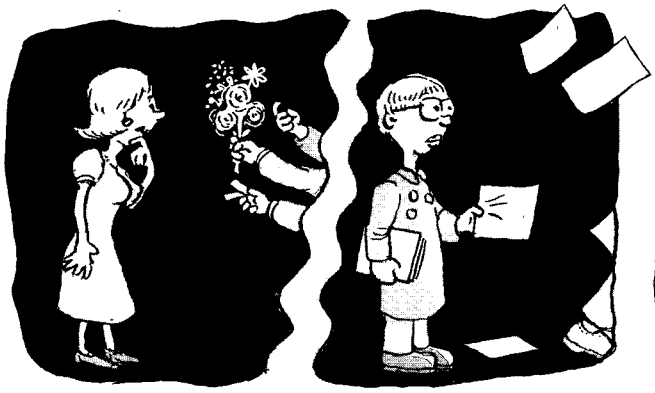
Plain girls can handle suffering
Much of men's abuse
But a pretty girl is helpless
If subjected to ill use.



If a pretty girl reveals a thought
Men announce it is a gem.

A plain girl's brilliant thesis
Is meaningless to them.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

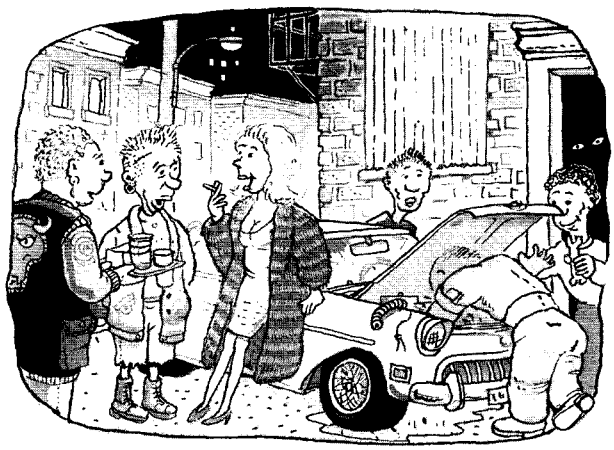


When not invited anywhere
Pretty girls are known to cry
Plain girls must content themselves
With a single wistful sigh.

Pretty girls need help in moving
Or putting up a shelf
A plain girl may also need help
But she can do it herself.

If destined for a party
Plain girls show plenty grit
They head out in a blizzard
It's their way of keeping fit.

But men go rushing to her aid
Should a pretty girl require a lift
And should she tire from exercise
She gets a compliment or gift.



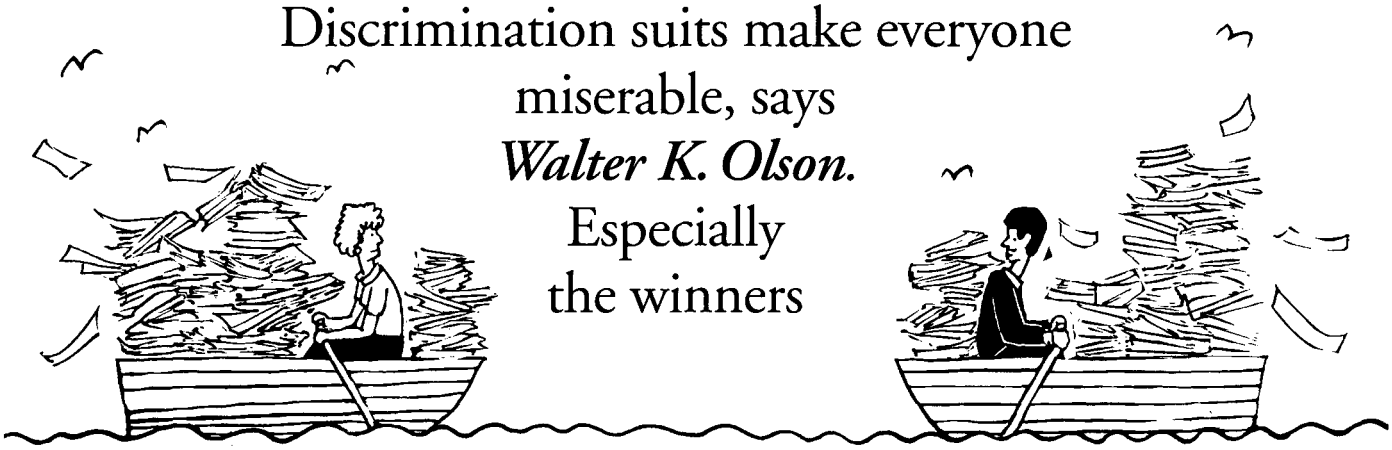
She might break down otherwise
And simply go to pieces
Attentive men make sure
That her every trouble ceases.

The tender heart of a pretty girl
Needs tender loving care
In the case of a plain girl
She can always say a prayer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Don't Get Even, Get Mad

Discrimination suits make everyone miserable, says *Walter K. Olson.* Especially the winners



In her history of women at the *New York Times,* Nan Robertson tells the story of the early landmark sex-bias lawsuit of 1974 (*Boylan* v. *New York Times*), which charged the paper's management with paying its female employees less than their male counterparts. Robertson's book, *The Girls in the Balcony,* recounts the ways in which women had been patronized, underpaid, and generally given less than the best shake at the paper. In short, she wears on her sleeve her sympathy for the lawsuit's premises and goals. All the more noteworthy, then, that she recounts its events with such palpable ambivalence.

The suit was big and messy. The plaintiffs deposed eighteen of the paper's executives and successfully demanded ten years' worth of payroll records for its entire work force. They also demanded, and had to be given, reams of private correspondence, memos, and confidential personnel evaluations written by the paper's bigwigs. So as to allow proper comparisons, the paper had to turn over confidential evaluations of this sort for its male as well as female reporters.

One highlight was the deposition of its managing editor (later columnist) A. M. Rosenthal, which went on for three days and produced a 571-page, six-pound transcript. (Rosenthal was apparently outraged that the opposition could demand confidential in-house memos and the like, not having realized that the law armed bias complainants' lawyers with such powers, though his paper had consistently editorialized in favor of conferring the broadest rights on those lawyers.) As lawyers grilled Rosenthal under oath about the reasons why one reporter was paid more than another, they elicited the sort of opinions that might have been set forth in a particularly salty memoir. "I recall people saying that she had a foul temper; that she shouted at people; that she used obscenities and was very difficult to get along with; cried rather too much," he said of one plaintiff. Others he described as, "puerile, simplistic, poor, uninspiring, merely competent." Defending the paper's compensation policies, Rosenthal argued that—in Robertson's paraphrase—he "had also given some men jobs at lower salaries than they were worth."

The *Times*' lawyers could dish it out as well as take it, conducting a "brutal, painful, lacerating, and bruising" deposition of leading reporter Eileen Shanahan to extract admissions, damaging to her side's case, about ways her work had fallen short of perfection. By the time a few months of this sort of thing had gone by, the atmosphere had become "poisonous." Attorney Harriet Rabb, who represented the women employees as part of a string of high-profile feminist cases and then quit the field, put it bluntly: Waging a lawsuit against one's employer is a "long, slow, painful, difficult, and ego-destroying process."

By the time going to trial became a possibility, Robertson writes, the very thought loomed as a "vision of horror" to all involved. Rabb kept imagining "two huge ships...on a collision course." *Times* lawyer Kathy Darrow thought it would be "like the worst divorce that ever happened"—worse in a way, because the parties would "have to live with each other afterward ....How will they get a newspaper out?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"We knew that people were going to get up on that stand and say terrible things about each other in public.... Even taking the depositions, people cried, people were devastated, and there was nobody there but the lawyers to hear them."

Rabb recalled, "If they were going to say something rotten about one of our women, we'd say something rotten about their men. We knew vile things, and they knew vile things. We'd wave papers with damning facts at each other. We had a vast pile of shared, accumulated knowledge—it would wreck not just individuals, men and women alike, but the *Times*." What bothered her most was not the dirt on who was a drunk or an adulterer, but the attacks on competence. "To strike at somebody's conception of his or her standards of professionalism is devastating. The thought of having it dragged into the light scared the socks off me. The lawyers on the other side would ask, 'Are you really prepared to do this?' Or we'd say, 'Is this what you are prepared to do to win?' We never answered each other."

If identity politics is a religion, then the discrimination lawsuit surely counts as one of its chief official sacraments. Much of the literature treats bias in the work place as the pivotal form of societal oppression of women (as of blacks, gays, etc.). And suing one's boss is supposed to be the ideal way to expose the true scope of oppression, secure relief in one's own case, and throw a scare into other employers.

Such is the official line. When someone we actually know gets enmeshed in a legal battle with her employer, we are likely to react rather differently, fearing that she is headed for personal disaster. And with reason. George LaNoue and Barbara Lee's study of litigation by university faculty noted that although a few complainants found the experience "exhilarating," many more suffered lasting harm to "their finances; their relationships with family, friends, and colleagues; their attitudes toward lawyers and the legal process in general; and most of all [to] their careers." Thus when *Lieberman* v. *Gant*, a 1980 denial-of-tenure suit against the University of Connecticut, eventually reached trial it absorbed fifty-two days of court time, the evidence filling nearly ten thousand pages including four hundred exhibits. The shaken department head whose actions were under challenge declared that the case had "cost him at least one book," but Lieberman herself fared worse: she was hit with a bill from her lawyers for more than $14,000 for copying costs alone, and declared bankruptcy.

That was a losing case. What about cases that win?

Few lawsuits are more successful than the famous class action of *Rajender* v. *University of Minnesota*. The liberal federal judge Miles Lord appointed three "special masters" with wide-ranging authority to intervene in every university policy and personnel decision over ten years to ensure the most favorable shake for women. Over the decade that followed, the number of women at all levels of the institution rose impressively. Of course the same thing was happening in universities nationwide that hadn't been sued; the biggest single factor was surely that female talent had surged into the profession.

Among women actually on the Minnesota faculty, most were at first largely indifferent to the suit and later, when it had become a dominant force on campus, torn by it. In the early stages, a lawyer for complainant Shyamala Rajender pleaded to "at least put some warm bodies in the courtroom so that when the judge looks up, there are a few women out there who are interested in the case."

Professor Charlotte Striebel was glad the suit had opened the university's internal processes to scrutiny: "When I want data, I talk to my attorney and my attorney talks to their attorney and their attorney talks to the people with the data" (reminiscent of Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire*: "Do not try to explain to me what your lawyer tells you but have him explain it to my lawyer, and he will explain it to me"). But others, like physics professor Phyllis Freier, who had waited twenty years to get tenure, were less pleased. "Filing official complaints

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

really dirties your relationships with people," she said. "The university is one of the most important institutions in the state. I hate to see anything bad and wasteful happen to it."

And Rajender herself? She got a six-figure cash settlement, but not the academic career she'd hoped for: she left the university to become a patent lawyer. "I am sure the case is having an enormous impact in higher education," she later said, "but from my personal point of view it was a terrible price to pay. I will carry the scars of battle for the rest of my life."

IT'S A TRUISM that litigation is carried on via the adversary process, but the process often turns out to be a good deal more adversarial than its novice participants were expecting. Take a case charging unequal pay or failure to promote. The complainant may expect to denounce management, hear its defense, and let a jury decide.

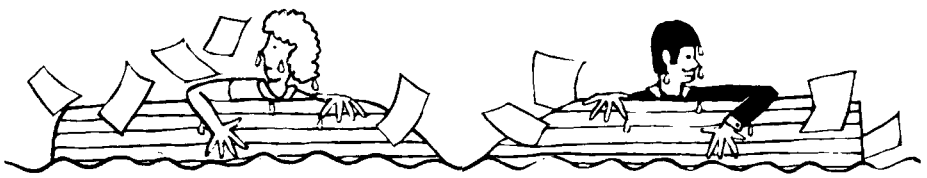
Or, if she is more familiar with the process, she may be prepared for the employer's lawyers to search out every bit of evidence suggesting that she was a poor performer, interview her coworkers in search of the most damaging such bits, and assemble the whole into a coherent if one-sided narrative to her discredit. What she may not anticipate is the case her own side will have to make. That case may require focusing hostile scrutiny on a male coworker against whom she may have no particular grudge, "chosen," as LaNoue and Lee put it, "because he has some weakness that will make the plaintiff look good by comparison." This "comparator" will be shown to have gotten higher pay or faster promotion, or survived a layoff when she didn't; and the case may turn on how effectively the lawyer can assemble evidence of his incompetence, personality flaws, and so forth.

Nancy Ezold sued the big law firm of Wolf, Block, Schorr, and Solis-Cohen for turning down her partnership bid, arguing that eight men had made partner over the same period. She eventually lost, but the resulting airing of the men's dirty laundry became the talk of the Philadelphia legal community. "People knew which associate had offended the father-in-law of which senior partner," ran the *New York Times* account. "They knew which associate had 'disappeared without notice, sometimes for a couple of days, and sometimes on extended vacations,' and who had said that about him. They knew which lawyer's 'lack of judgment' almost cost a client $1 million. They knew whose writing skills were seen as not being up to par, and who was perceived as 'more sizzle than steak.'"

Even if people have not chosen sides at the start, the process is likely to lead in that direction. "You become an enemy," said one professor at the City University of New York. "You're not a colleague and not accepted as you were before." The more collegial the work place had been, the greater the scar tissue. "Institutions that have been through a full-scale legal battle really know it," Princeton counsel Thomas H. Wright, Jr. has observed. "Class action and tenure disputes can just rip the department and even an institution apart in ways that take years to rebuild." Said a professor who won her suit, "Nothing has changed, but I avoid them (colleagues and administrators) at all costs."

Nor is the damage confined to fancy institutions; it happens on Main Street too. In the town of Montrose, New York, a controversy over whether the school board properly removed principal Joanne Falinski, two years into the legal process, "has split parents into pro- and anti-Falinski camps," according to another *New York Times* report. "Children from families on opposing sides no longer have play dates. Former friends silently push their grocery carts past each other at the local A&P. 'There are deep-seated animosities here, and feelings in these cases tend to last for years, like the Hatfields and the McCoys,' said Robert Saperstein, Dr. Falinski's lawyer. 'It will probably go on until all the children and parents involved have graduated from the school system.'"

Helping spread the acrimony is the now-common lawyer's tactic of suing managers or supervisors, owners or company directors as individuals, which certainly does get their attention. In one early harassment case, a federal judge levied personal fines on workers at a Western Electric plant, including supervisors who'd engaged in no harassment themselves but failed to prevent "boisterous" underlings from doing so. To make sure of achieving a deterrent effect, the court



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

forbade the company to reimburse the workers for the fines. As a federal court put it in a 1990 bias case, current law permits the imposition of personal liability on everyone who "participated in the decision making process that forms the basis of the discrimination."

NAMING MANAGERS AS defendants is now standard in California wrongful-firing suits, according to the *San Francisco Recorder*, the city's legal newspaper. Sometimes a complaint will name outside consultants or even ordinary co-workers said to have conspired against a worker's interests by, say, accepting a promotion they knew should have gone to her.

It is like an especially nasty divorce, especially when the warring parties insist on living under the same roof. In fact, as it happens, employment law began as a branch of Domestic Relations. That was back in the days when most hirings included room and board and many employees were underage servants and apprentices. Later, when it came to be expected that workers would fend for themselves as independent adults, the law of the workplace pried itself loose from domestic relations to fuse, continental-plate-like, with the vast new continent of Contract—symbolizing the celebrated movement from the unchosen relations of status to the voluntary relations of a modern commercial society.

Yet over the past couple of decades in America something quite different has been happening. Harvard's Mary Ann Glendon sums it up by saying that we've increasingly reversed our legal treatment of employment and matrimony. We used to require people to show a judge good cause before they could get out of a marriage, but left employment to the continuing free will of the parties. Now we prefer a fresh start instead of an attempt to force parties to sup at the same unhappily matched table—provided the table's located in a home. If it's in an office suite, they may have to stick it out forever. ◆

From The Excuse Factory *by Walter K. Olson. Copyright © 1997 by Walter K. Olson. Reprinted by permission of the Free Press, a division of Simon & Shuster, Inc.*

SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE

BROWN UNIVERSITY HAS been forced to close its freshman football team. The reason is not any lack of would-be players, but the courts' decision to take on, as a new responsibility, the supervision of varsity sports in America. A federal appeals court has re-interpreted Title IX of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to mean that colleges must field varsity teams by quota: if Brown's student body is fifty-two percent female, fifty-two percent of its varsity athletes must be female, too. If not enough girls sign up, then boys must be sent home. The Supreme Court has refused to review the decision, leaving it as law. As a result, colleges across the country have been forced to shut down hundreds of male sports, including the Olympic-training programs that created gold-medal winners in diving and swimming.

But if we are to apply this new vision of equality fairly, surely we must consider male quotas for the more traditionally female programs as well. At Brown, for instance, ninety-one percent of all fall applicants interested in dance are women, as are fifty-six percent of those wanting to take up drama, and sixty-six percent of those wishing to pursue music. So unless Brown can increase its number of male ballerinas, or persuade its theater department to stage only those plays in which men account for forty-eight percent of the roles, or enlist eighteen percent more male musicians, then the college should have to start cutting these programs, too. Right?

Now, about those Harvard-Yale football games...◆

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Correspondence

You never know what will offend people. But we're on a roll! In the last issue, the editor's "Diary" alone managed—in one sentence—to offend vegetarians who resented being lumped in with radical lesbian feminists and wiccans (modern practitioners of witchcraft), and wiccans who resented being lumped in with vegetarians and radical lesbian feminists...and, well, you read the rest. (We didn't hear from vegetarian wiccans angry at being lumped in with lesbian feminists. So we can't know the answer to our now burning question: Would a vegetarian witch substitute eye-of-potato for eye-of-newt?) Funnily, no one objected to the crudely graphic descriptions of feminist sex, the actual topic of the Diary, which makes us think that some of our readers have skewed notions of what should be considered taboo.

Meanwhile, Jonathan Foreman—our hapless "Token Man" from the Winter 1997 issue—should avoid attending any conventions of cat lovers in the near future, as Julia Duin makes clear. And Rondi Adamson of Toronto, Canada, took up our challenge in the last correspondence column to come up with a list of "Things a Feminist Might Actually Find Funny" (she also penned our "One Last Observation" in this issue, which has something in it to offend everybody). Any more contenders?

Send all correspondence to the Editor, The Women's Quarterly, 2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 550, Arlington, Virginia, 22201-3057 or fax to (703) 243-9230. You may also reach us via e-mail at iwf@iwf.org. We welcome all letters, poison pen and otherwise.

Just don't cast any spells our direction, thanks.

Vegetarians aren't deviants

I am an avid supporter of the Independent Women's Forum. However, I was seriously offended by Danielle Crittenden's Diary ("Just Say No to Feminist Sex," Spring 1997). Perhaps you can tell me how you came to lump vegetarians in with lesbians, wiccans, and radicals? Actually, as a vegetarian of ten years I don't mind the association with radicals since throughout history any person who chose to stand on truth, integrity, and principle often found themselves defined as a "radical" within the context of popular culture. By lumping vegetarians with the deviant and abnormal behavior of lesbians and wiccans however, you reveal some ignorance about a choice of honest conscience.

I initially became a vegetarian in my efforts to cope with some health problems. Solid science supports the fact that a meat-based diet is a significant contributor to obesity, heart, and circulatory diseases. In my case this diet has proven very effective in restoring fitness and health. As a lifelong lover of animals, my decision to eliminate meat and flesh foods from my diet has also eased my conscience. I recommend you educate yourself on the inhumane, torturous lives we humans of modern, commercial animal husbandry now subject these creatures to for the sake of our Big Macs, chicken fingers, and pork chops.

That, Miss Crittenden, is a position of which I am proud. I certainly do not think it deserves to be associated with lesbians and wiccans. I hope I have been of some assistance in enlightening you about an errant stereotypical belief about vegetarian people. We are not all over-aged hippies on some militant mission. We are simply people of conscience, compassion, and high intellect capable of analyzing reality.

LYNNE PARISE
Portland, Oregon

Free worship for wiccans

As a member of the IWF who has gotten a great deal of pleasure out of Danielle Crittenden's writing (especially her Diary on Jane Austen, a personal heroine), I would like to ask that in the future you do not lump wiccans in with the rest of the "femradical" subsets that hassle you. As you may have already guessed, I am a conservative, libertarian, practicing wiccan. Most serious wiccans tend to be conservative, intensely private individuals, at least about our religion because it is so open to misunderstanding. There are many who espouse the wiccan philosophy who are of the "talk the talk but don't walk the walk" variety, but I submit to you that that is also true of many who preach the Judeo-Christian philosophy.

Freedom of worship is one of the reasons America came into existence and from my observation, that freedom is not afforded to those of us who have chosen outside the mainstream religious organizations.

Once again I offer my thanks to you for a wonderful publication—finally a voice for women that echoes my own.

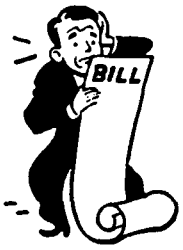
CYNTHIA NEIL
Lake Ridge, Virginia

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sometimes a 'W' is just a 'W'

ENJOYED YOUR LAST Diary and have a suggestion for how you can discourage submissions from the sexually deranged: Redesign your logo. Like Joe Camel's face, that "W" is an anatomical marvel!

F.R. DUPLANTIER
St. Louis, Missouri.



You can't pay too much for sex

WHEN JAMES K. GLASSMAN wrote "Don't Pay Too Much for Sex" (Spring 1997), he must not have completed his research. The basis of his argument relies on the history and performance of a single fund of $4.5 million, Women's Equity Fund. No one would ever choose a small growth fund and claim that its history and performance represents all other growth funds. How does Women's Equity Fund represent the other socially responsible funds? A single fund's poor performance does not prove that all Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) has done poorly. In fact, this $4.5 million does not even come close to representing one percent of the $162 billion socially screened portfolios and mutual funds.

Mr. Glassman attempts to further his argument by stating that socially responsible mutual funds have a traditionally poor performance with only five of the forty-four SRI funds beating the S&P 500 in 1996 and none beating the Dow Jones Industrial Average. He has now taken not only one fund, but also one arbitrary year for performance to judge all SRI funds. We all know that the average investor looks for more than one year of performance. In addition, Mr. Glassman neglects to point out that in 1996 only seventeen percent of the approximately 4,273 all-equity mutual funds classified by Morningstar outperformed the S&P 500 and only 4.4 percent outperformed the DJI average.

Ultimately Mr. Glassman generalizes that socially responsible mutual funds are poor performers because the concept is not taken seriously by investors and Wall Street and therefore the SRI funds do not attract the best managers. Contrary to his statements, Socially Responsible Investing is on the rise. In the past five years, over twenty-seven new SRI funds have been created in response to client demand. As for female money managers, Glassman implies that women are too conservative in their investments and then praises some female money managers for their outstanding performance. Are there not both high and poor performing funds run by men and women alike?

It is not a "silly" concept to put your money in line with your values. I hope Mr. Glassman's article will at least remind you to do your research before investing.

JANET PRINDLE
Principal and Portfolio Manager
Neuberger & Berman
New York, New York

James K. Glassman responds:

Janet Prindle's main point is that "a single fund's poor performance does not prove that all Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) has done poorly." She's right, and I never said it did. I highlighted the Women's Equity mutual fund because it's the only SRI fund with "women" in its title and a feminist bent to its investing strategy. But I stand by what I said about "socially conscious" funds in general. "Traditionally," I wrote, "they perform poorly."

Any reader unconvinced by my piece should consider these figures which I recently elicited from Lipper Analytical Services, Inc., the respected firm that tracks mutual fund performance. Over the past year, SRI domestic stock funds have returned an average of 11.6 percent, compared with an average of 15.2 percent for all stock funds. Over the past three years (ending June 5), SRIs returned 15.8 percent on an annualized basis; all funds returned 19.4 percent. For five years, the SRIs returned 13.2 percent; all funds, 15.6 percent. These are significant differences. Over five years, $1,000 in the average SRI became $1,855, but the same amount in the average stock fund became $2,064—or eleven percent more.

Another clarification: I never said that it was "a 'silly' concept to put your money in line with your values." On the contrary, no one should invest in a company that acts in an immoral fashion. What I said, referring to the policies of Women's Equity, was: "It's a little silly to think that any mutual fund is going to affect the corporate policies of, say, Exxon—certainly not a fund with $4.5 million in assets." One final note: While I sympathize with the idea of socially responsible investing, I can't understand why anyone would turn over moral decision-making to a mutual fund manager. If you want to pick and choose with ethics as your guide, do it yourself.

Throw him to the dogs

UPON READING THE horrendous "Two-Cat Women" screed by Jonathan Foreman (Winter 1997), three of us single, female, multiple-cat owners at work began talking about a possible response. We have amongst us seven cats, which

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

makes us better adjusted to life's loneliness—not maladjusted, as the ill-intentioned author suggested. Plus, having those furry faces around makes you clean and vacuum the bathroom (or wherever the site of the kitty box may be) twice as much. Obviously Mr. Foreman hasn't been in too many bathrooms of single female cat owners. And the ownership of cats connotes not desperation but security. We don't have to wait for a man's approval before importing several furry ones as roommates, bed-warmers, and babies with fur. We are actually the most compassionate of women, as we help take care of society's unwanted pets, compared to our more selfish—or allergic—sisters.

Cats are tremendously socializing entities. What else would get us leaping over our neighbors' fences, running down driveways, dashing across streets, and rooting about the bushes next door in search of Fluffy? More people have approached me to start conversations about my lovely tabby as she sits out front summer evenings surveying the landscape than I would ever get as some selfish hussy wasting my time going out with the likes of Mr. Foreman.

Next time, try a piece on the joys of cat ownership or "Why Cats Are Better Than Men." As Nina de Gramont wrote in the March issue of *Cats* magazine: "Never date men who hate cats. They fear what cannot be manipulated and controlled." She waits for the man who extends a respectful hand to her cat, she writes, and then says, "What a beautiful cat." "I will know," she concludes, "from his voice and his hands on her fur if he speaks the truth. And I will have found a suitor worthy of my consideration and a consort worthy of my cat."

So there.

JULIA DUIN
Falls Church, Virginia

Back issues make elegant kitty box liners, too

A FRIEND RECENTLY introduced me to *TWQ*, and after reading several issues from the last two years, I decided I must become a subscriber. With the same crazy schedule as all your other readers, I was skeptical that any additional publication would be compelling enough to add to my already overloaded reading regimen. I was very impressed with *TWQ*, however, because the points-of-view expressed are thoughtful and refreshingly different.

SUSAN NEELY
Washington, D.C

Wish you'd been on with us

I SAW BOTH Danielle Crittenden and Lynne Cheney [who serves on the IWF's board] on television and wanted to put in my two cents. Miss Crittenden, the next time someone complains that you're from Canada and shouldn't talk about the United States, remind him/her that Peter Jennings, Robert MacNeil, and Morley Safer are also Canadian, and they always have plenty to say about the U.S. (and it's not always good: remember the remark about two-year-olds having a tantrum?). Mrs. Cheney, if Bob Beckel starts pontificating again about how colleges recruit black athletes, remind him that these young men (mostly) are getting in the old-fashioned way—on merit. No football, basketball, etc. program worth its salt is going to bring someone in if he can't play the game. It should work the same way in academics. If you can't cut it, you shouldn't be there.

Thank you for letting me vent. I read the IWF's publications regularly, and am delighted that there is a group speaking out for the rest of us.

JULIE PRALL
New York, New York

The Lorena Bobbitt Comedy Hour

I AM SENDING, per your request, a "Top Ten List of Things a Feminist Might Actually Find Funny." (I'm not sure if it was a serious request, but hey, what the heck! It's certainly one of the most challenging things I've ever had to write.)

10. Bonfire of Camille Paglia's books
9. Gayla Zigo
8. Decapitated Martha Stewart
7. Decapitated Barbie dolls
6. Decapitated Kate Moss
5. Martha Stewart burning dinner
4. Barbie getting fat
3. Kate Moss getting fat
2. Larry Flynt tied to a car bumper
1. Partial-birth abortions

RONDI ADAMSON
Toronto, Ontario

NOSTRA CULPA

In "How We Got the ERA" by Anita Blair (cover story, Spring 1997), gremlins got a hold of our page proofs and scribbled in a mistake. Blair's story originally noted that it takes three-fourths of the states (or thirty-eight, to be exact) to ratify a constitutional amendment—not two-thirds, as the gremlins would have it (perhaps they were ERA supporters). In any case, we regret the error.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One last observation . . .

Bulimic Barbie

Rondi Adamson suggests a whole new line of politically correct Barbies

A FEW DAYS after Mattel launched "Share A Smile Becky"—Barbie's new handicapped friend—activists for the disabled complained that Barbie's Dream House™ was inaccessible to Becky's sporty purple wheelchair. A spokesman for Mattel said the company was looking into redesigning the two-storey pink mansion so Becky can visit without being made to roll around to the house's wall-less backside (and don't forget to install those grip bars in the hot tub, either!). Rush Limbaugh has suggested that Mattel create a "Pro Bono Ken" to represent Becky in a lawsuit against Barbie under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Still, as the Mattel spokesman rather defensively pointed out, when you're attempting to "bring these things into the mainstream" there are always going to be critics. And Share A Smile Becky is indeed a beautiful role model for the physically challenged: great figure, great hair, great face, and a *great* attitude. Here are some other role-model Barbies that Mattel ought to consider:

Battered Wife Barbie: "Debbie" will come with removable bruises, cuts, and scars as well as a list of excuses for why she won't leave her husband. Instead of a dream home, Mattel will offer a cheerfully painted Just Like Mom's Battered-Women's Shelter™ where Debbie can periodically visit after a fight with "Abusive Husband Ken." This new Ken doll will come complete with five-o'clock shadow, a case of beer, and a list of self-serving reasons for his violent rages.

Bomber Pilot/Adulteress Barbie: "Kerry," the first Barbie to fly a B-52, will be quite a role model for girls aspiring to a career in the military. Accessories for Kerry will include a pink-and-turquoise B-52, as well as a matching bomber-pilot uniform and an assortment of slinky lingerie for her romantic trysts with the husbands of enlisted women. Unlike regular Barbies, Kerry will have changeable facial expressions—"tough and determined" when flying, "sultry" when trysting, and "teary-eyed" when defending herself on "Sixty Minutes."

Homeless Barbie: Guaranteed to develop your child's compassionate side, "Marnie" will be the only Barbie with body odor. Carrying a tiny bottle of booze in a paper bag and pushing a shopping cart full of dirty, discarded Barbie clothes, objects, and plastic food, Marnie—with the pull of a string—will mumble obscenities and shout at passers-by.

Bulimic Barbie: "Tracy" will have fingers that can be stuck down an opening in her smiling mouth. She will come with cardboard laxatives and diuretics, fashion magazines for her to obsess over, several bags of chips, and removable padding to reflect her fluctuating weight. The new "Therapist Ken" will help Tracy to deal with her "issues." In one group-therapy session, Tracy will meet her new best friend "Super Obese Denise," the first fat Barbie. Denise will have no removable padding because, thanks to Therapist Ken, she will learn valuable lessons in self-esteem and accept her fatness as part of who she is.

Radical Lesbian Feminist Barbie: To keep your little girl's mind thoroughly open, buy her nose-ringed, butch-haired, badly-dressed "Jan." Jan will be the only Barbie who doesn't smile. Instead, she will come with a miniature "Keep Abortion Legal" picket sign, and work as a volunteer in the Just Like Mom's Battered-Women's Shelter™ where she'll help Debbie (see above) understand Ken's role in the patriarchy. Then, when market testing shows the "mainstream" to be ready, Mattel will launch Jan's cat-loving girlfriend "Mira," who will come with five insertable in-vitro treatments so she and Jan can practice family values.

And speaking of "Pro Bono Ken," why be sexist? Why doesn't Mattel create "Marcia," a working mother and attorney, to represent Debbie (when she finally presses charges against her husband), Kerry (when she fights her court-martial), Marnie (when she fights for her right to live outside of a mental institution), Tracy (when she sues Calvin Klein for causing her eating disorder), Denise (when she joins a class-action lawsuit against the airlines for not having wide enough seats), and Jan (when she takes her claim to share in her lover's health insurance all the way to the Supreme Court)?

As Mattel will discover, the possibilities are truly endless. ◆

Rondi Adamson is a writer in Toronto, Canada.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

An "increasingly high-profile group that says the time has come to put a new face on feminism."

–Ed Bradley, correspondent for CBS's "60 Minutes," on the IWF

For the past five years, the Independent Women's Forum has been taking on the old establishment of feminist organizations—and winning. "The IWF has a profile almost unheard of for a group that is the new kid on the block," writes the *Boston Globe*. "In the marketplace of ideas, from the national news media all the way down to local radio, the IWF has shown its real strength.... [The] IWF is well on its way to becoming the foremost media nemesis of the feminist movement."

Why has the IWF been so successful? Because the women who make up the IWF are not radical ideologues —they're businesswomen, economists, lawyers, truck drivers, and also mothers. Because the IWF promotes individual responsibility, strong families, limited government, and opportunity—policies that help *all* Americans. Because the IWF, a non-partisan, non-profit Washington-based organization, sponsors speaker events and conferences noted for their provocative and free-ranging debates.

And because the IWF publishes *The Women's Quarterly*—an intellectual antidote to *Ms.*—which syndicated columnist Mona Charen praises as, "My type of women's magazine! With humor and sarcasm but also with warmth and passion, these women offer an intelligent refutation of the leading feminist nonsense that is swallowed so uncritically by the mainstream press."

Why not join us? Check "Yes, I want to join" on the enclosed reply card, and you'll receive a year's subscription to *The Women's Quarterly** as well as our insiders-only newsletter *Ex Femina,* special invitations to our conferences and speeches, and discounts on books and events. Most important, you'll be adding another voice of reason—yours!—to the cultural and political debates of our time.

* Separate subscriptions to *The Women's Quarterly* are also available. See reply card for details.

The Women's Quarterly

Independent Women's Forum
2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 550
Arlington, Virginia 22201-3057

Address Correction Requested

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED